

## Focus and Self-Assessment

**IT IS TIME** to transition from disappointment, anger, fear, and despair – from job loss or anxiousness over starting anew – to **a business-like assessment of you and your accomplishments, skills, desires, goals, and priorities**. It's time to **set your goals** and prepare to **tell your story** – your narrative – **to get yourself out in the marketplace WITH CONFIDENCE**.

A clear definition of who you are, what you want, and how you plan to get it – is critical to your progress. You must develop and maintain a positive attitude and clear understanding of your personality, values, wants, needs, interests, abilities, and priorities.

You must

- Get to **KNOW** yourself, then
  - Prepare and **PACKAGE** yourself, then
  - Learn to **SELL** yourself.
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### Focus and Self-Assessment – Worksheets

#### Using the detail and summary worksheets:

1. Draw a timeline.
2. Note the major events and accomplishments.
3. Fill out the details for each accomplishment.
4. Fill out the summaries from the themes you find.
5. Pick out the 'most valuable' 5 accomplishments for your narrative.
6. Write down and prioritize your values.
7. Write down your short, medium, and long term goals. Find resolutions to all foreseen obstacles.
8. Discuss these with your family. Review and revise them as needed.

## FOCUS – Research and Personal Reflection

The **FOCUS** process is a proven methodology that incorporates research and personal reflection to assist you to clearly identify the career path you wish to embrace. The process is highly dependent on the effort which you put into it. Seek guidance throughout your research so you stay on track.

- Use a binder to document your research and thoughts as you walk through the process.
- Keep a list of everyone with whom you contact to discuss your research.
- Plan to work at least two hours per day for 14 days; this will generally get you approximately 80% of the way. The last 20% is dependent upon a number of factors, such as:
  - How complex your individual situation is, e.g. limitations or unusual restrictions you may have concerning job location, relocation, salary, title, etc.
  - If you are making a career change.
  - How diligent you are in pursuing the process.

Work through the following tasks using the supplied worksheets when applicable, and record them in your binder. Remember - it is not easy, but the rewards are astonishing!

### TIMELINE, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, SKILLS, and ABILITIES

1. List at least five accomplishments in your lifetime. Draw them over a timeline. They can include personal or professional situations. Describe each accomplishment in detail.
  - List the skills you employed. (e.g. drawing, typing, etc.)
  - List the abilities you employed. (e.g. motivating, organizing, evaluating, analyzing, etc.)
  - List the experiences you used from previous employment or personal life.
  - Write each description in S.O.A.R. format (Situation, Opportunity, Actions, Results).
2. List your key skills in order of strength. (e.g. 1 to 10)
3. List your key abilities in order of strength. (e.g. 1 to 10)
4. Read or study at least three people whom you identify as being successful or recognized for their accomplishments. You do not have to agree with everything about the person. The individuals that you select may be relatives, supervisors, public figures, a religious person, famous or unknown. Think through the whos, whens, whys, and the circumstances or events you can recall.

### LIKES and DISLIKES, NEEDS and DESIRES

5. List five tasks or assignments that you really enjoyed and why.
6. List five tasks or assignments that you do NOT enjoy and why.
7. Identify feedback you have received from others. (e.g. commendations, positive and negative feedback/comments, praise for a job well done, constructive criticism of your style, abilities, etc.)
8. Read the want ads, ignoring job titles; write down the key words that you believe you relate to.
9. Write a newspaper ad you believe you would be at least 75% qualified and then describe what the attractions in the ad are to you.
10. Visualize your new job.
11. Make an action statement: "I wish to be employed as ..." Show title, qualifications, skills, abilities, challenges, etc.

### VALUES and GOALS, OBSTACLES to OVERCOME

12. Identify the three to five most important things in your life and why. Give this a lot of thought and write them on a stickup or piece of paper and keep them close to review periodically as you go through this process. Why an exercise like this? You need to know what your motivations are in life. In reflection, you may realize the absence of these things would cause you much unhappiness.
13. List what you would like to change most in your professional life and in your personal life.
14. Describe in your own words how you will measure your success in life and on the job. How would you like to be described by others?
15. Write out tentative goals.
16. Identify anything that may keep you from reaching these goals. List ideas and plans to overcome them.

## Details

## TIMELINE, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, SKILLS and ABILITIES



ACCOMPLISHMENT # \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Situation:

Opportunity:

Actions:

Results:

Skills Applied or Learned:

Abilities Applied or Learned:

ACCOMPLISHMENT # \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Situation:

Opportunity:

Actions:

Results:

Skills Applied or Learned:

Abilities Applied or Learned:

# Details

## TIMELINE, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, SKILLS and ABILITIES



<u>ACCOMPLISHMENT #</u> _____	Dates: From _____ To _____
Description: _____ _____	
Situation:	
Opportunity:	
Actions:	
Results:	
Skills Applied or Learned:	
Abilities Applied or Learned:	

<u>ACCOMPLISHMENT #</u> _____	Dates: From _____ To _____
Description: _____ _____	
Situation:	
Opportunity:	
Actions:	
Results:	
Skills Applied or Learned:	
Abilities Applied or Learned:	

## Skills Assessment

### PROOF BY EXAMPLE WORKSHEET

1. **SKILL** \_\_\_\_\_

2. **PRESENT A CONCRETE EXAMPLE**

Where were you employed, and for how long?

What employer did you perform this skill for and for how long?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. **QUALIFY EXAMPLE: DESCRIBE CIRCUMSTANCES**

who, what, when, where, why, how (Details of performance)

\_\_\_\_\_

4. **REINFORCE WITH MEASURABLE DATA**

numbers, dollars, percentages, volume per month, year, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. **GIVE RESULTS...WHAT HAPPENED?**

How did the company benefit from your skill?

\_\_\_\_\_

Above is from Georgia Dept. of Labor

Personality Evaluation at

<http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp>

## Summaries

### **LIKES AND DISLIKES**

Likes:

Dislikes:

### **NEEDS AND DESIRES**

Needs:

Desires:

### **CULTURES**

Desired:

Won't Go There:

### **FEEDBACK**

Positive:

Negative:

# Summaries

## TOP 5 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

## VALUES

More Important:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Less Important:

### Things I would like to change the most

Professional:

Personal:

# Summaries

## GOALS AND OBSTACLES

### Short-Term: ( 0 - \_\_\_\_ years)

1. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
2. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
3. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
4. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
5. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_

### Medium-Term: ( \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ years)

1. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
2. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
3. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
4. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
5. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_

### Long-Term: ( \_\_\_\_ + years)

1. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
2. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
3. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
4. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_
5. GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
Obstacles: \_\_\_\_\_

## Examples

To get an idea for the type of words or descriptions you might use in the worksheets above, here's a collection of samples:

### Values:

- Family, Faith, Health, Security, Ethics, Honesty, Reputation, Dependability, Trustworthiness, Hope, Determination, Positive attitude/outlook
- God, Family/Children, Service to Others, Friends/Co-Workers, Job/Career/School, Financial Stability, Community Involvement, Environment, Politics
- Income, Job Security, Income Security, Career Growth, Company Growth, Training, Quality of Product, Company Reputation, Personal Recognition

### Skills:

- Trained or experienced in specific industry skills
  - Retail Banking operations, Airline scheduling, Hotel management, Financial planning
- Trained or experienced in specific procedures or methods
  - P&L management, Registered Nurse, Medical Technologist, PMI certified, Multilingual
- Trained or experienced in specific equipment or hardware
  - Television repair (Sony, RCA), school bus driver, truck driver (Freightliner, Mack), telecom equipment installer (Lucent, CISCO), Unix system administrator (SCO, HP-UX)
- Trained or experienced in specific computer software
  - Microsoft Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Project, etc., ACT software, Java programming, Oracle database management

### Abilities:

- Dedication to task, Determination, Diligence, Strategic, Management, Organization, Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Measure/evaluate staff, Instructor, Problem Solver, Independent worker, Quick study, Motivator, Visionary, Innovator, Negotiator, Detail-oriented, Trustworthy, Can manage risk, Can sell, Can make complex sales, Can sell to 'C'-level/senior management

### Strengths:

- Leadership, ethics, problem solving, recruiting, programming wireless devices

### Weaknesses:

- Budgeting, public speaking, handling personnel conflicts

### Likes:

- Hands-on tasks, short projects, interact with people, travel, work w/ team, work independently

### Dislikes:

- Customer support tasks, night & weekend jobs, lots of paperwork, office politics, negative attitudes

### Cultures:

- Flexible work hours, fast-paced, competitive environment, international business
- Open management, micro-management, small groups, large organizations, ethical organizations

### Situation:

- Unsuccessful sales efforts, repeated loss of revenue, high costs, ambitious new project

### Opportunities:

- Generate new revenue, turnaround a sliding/failing company, reduce costs, lead the project, introduce new designs

### Actions:

- Reorganized the department, closed larger deals, completed the project ahead of schedule and under budget, used unique skills to rebuild the device

### Results:

- Sold \$10M more product than last 2 years combined, increased revenues by 20%, Saved \$100K annually using new device

# Examples

## Using S-O-A-R to rewrite accomplishments - Remove details and build a summary

### Original:

**BELLSOUTH CELLULAR CORP.**

Atlanta, Georgia

February 1994 - November 1996

Contract Architect / Developer

**Designed, developed, and implemented a Unix/Sybase inter-network application processing engine (XCAPE) and a comprehensive cellular message-processing application (REBA - Reformat, Edit, Apply Airtime/Roam/Toll Charges) on multiple hardware, operating systems, and locations (over 100 million messages per month). The system is capable of batch and real-time modes and specializes in processing speed, adaptability to changing business/market needs, and reduced concept-to-implementation time of new applications.** Originally brought in to develop a smaller subsystem, I presented a prototype for the XCAPE engine in mid-1994 and the BellSouth management decided to halt a large message processing and airtime rating development project in order to move to my design. The first application was implemented in October 1994 and a total of twenty-one markets were installed with the remaining six markets scheduled for 1996-97. I developed a real-time mode for the system for BellSouth's business participation in the Atlanta Olympic Games in 1996. As of mid-1999, the system is still in use after analyses determined it could not be out-performed by new designs.

Telecommunications switches: - Autoplex, Hughes, Motorola, Ericsson, DSC, Harris, DEC, NorTel.

Internet Networks, Systems: - Ethernet and Fibre networks, LANs, WANs, VPNs, routing and connectivity equipment voice/data.

Hardware: *UNIX-based:* HP 9000 (HP-UX v10,v9), Sun/Sparc (SunOS4,5), IBM RS-20,24,30,RS/6000 (AIX v4.1),

*PC-based:* PC 486/Pentium (Windows NT4.0,98,95,3.1x), Macintosh, *Proprietary OS-based:* IBM AS/400, Amdahl (MVS,TSO), DG Avion, WANG VS, IBM 30xx/370 (MVS,TSO), *Additional:* Verifone Transaction Terminals

Languages: C/C++, Java, HTML/CGI, Perl, COBOL, System Z (4GL), Pascal, Assembler, Fortran, Basic, RPG, TCL, and various proprietary languages.

DBMS/SQL: Sybase, Oracle, SQL Server 7.0, PC-based DBs (Paradox, dBase, etc.), and various custom databases. SQL (Interactive, embedded, open client programming, stored procedures) for all large DBs.

Environments: UNIX, CORBA, Windows NT/98/95, Sun JDK/JRE, Microsoft SDK/VM, Visual C++/J++, Visual Basic, MVS/TSO, Network/Comm, XWindows.

### Rewritten using SOAR:

**Built parallel processing engine rating 10 million transactions per day in 9 months for < \$600K, replacing an unsuccessful 3-year \$13M project as Consultant and Software Designer/Developer for BellSouth Cellular Corp. (now Cingular). Designed and implemented real-time cellular rating and billing system for 1996 Atlanta Olympics.**

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### Original:

**MAXXIS COMMUNICATIONS, INC.**

Atlanta, Georgia

October 1998 - Present

Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

**Built and operate this facilities-based long distance reseller and ISP.** Originally brought in to build technical systems by Tom Cordy, Cox Enterprises board member and CEO of Maxxis Group, the holding company, I was given the reins of Maxxis Communications immediately. Maxxis, a multi-level network marketing company, had provided long distance telephone and calling card services via an external reseller on a commission basis since incorporation in March 1997. In September 1998, Maxxis acquired two telephone switches in Chicago to control its own destiny. Mr. Cordy and I managed the work to secure all federal and state approvals and tariff filings for certification and authority to conduct resale of long distance services in all 50 states. Mr. Cordy and I negotiated and executed all carrier and vendor agreements necessary to establish operations. I recruited the staff for all departments – Network, Billing, Accounting, Collections, and Customer Services. Starting October 1998 with a staff of three, I have built the company to 35 employees in Atlanta, Chicago, and San Antonio. Utilizing a telephone network engineering consultant, I managed the acquisition and provisioning of both private-line and dedicated switched and switchless 1+, 800, and calling card services. I designed and custom-programmed the database, back-end billing, and front-end customer care software systems for Maxxis. We then executed a three-month migration of Maxxis' existing customer base to the new system. The back-end billing system is WinNT, Visual C++, using SQL Server 7.0 as the database. I built the front-end system in Visual Basic 6.0. I am also responsible for proposals to larger prospective customers.

### Rewritten using SOAR:

**Built \$12M Facilities-based Long Distance and Internet Access operation from ground up as Chief Operating Officer for Maxxis Communications. Managed P&L, lead day-to-day operations. Developed software for customer care, provisioning, and billing.**